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ABSTRACT

Canadian social life and public policy are increasingly influenced by Aboriginal people, their roles in Canadian society, and the issues that concern them. Drawing on a political economy perspective, this book provides a systematic analysis of how changing social dynamics, organized particularly around race, class, and gender relations, have shaped the life chances and conditions for Aboriginal people within the structure of Canadian society and its major institutions. Chapters cover: (1) political economy versus the Chicago School and internal colonialism as theoretical frameworks; (2) the State and the contradictions of Indian administration; (3) Aboriginal peoples and economic relations (what happened after the fur trade, capitalism, and contemporary class structure); (4) social reproduction and the welfare state (including social conditions, family relationships, and the impact of child welfare practices); (5) education and job training; (6) health status and health care; (7) law, crime, and the criminal justice system (including Aboriginal youth and juvenile justice); (8) Aboriginal organizations and struggles over citizenship rights; and (9) conflict, competition, and the contradictions of economic development. The education chapter presents schooling as a contradictory enterprise that holds forth to Aboriginal peoples the promise of new opportunities and self-determination while at the same time it contributes to their subordination and the devaluing of their experiences. (Contains extensive references, a bibliography, data tables and figures, and an index.) (SV)

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